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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Premier Ky told newsmen in Saigon on 26 May that he intended to run for the presidency whether or not Chief of State Thieu was also a candidate. Ky's public statement dismissed his earlier suggestion that he might withdraw if Thieu chose to run.

Tran Van Huong, former premier and leading civilian aspirant to the presidency, also announced his candidacy on 26 May. During the past few days Premier Ky [redacted] and Huong have agreed that if either is elected president he would appoint the other as premier.

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Huong might favor such an "understanding," if it has in fact been reached, but he is unlikely to admit to it during the campaign. Running as the only effective civilian alternative to continued military government, he could hardly afford to appear to be in league with Ky. From Ky's point of view, however, even the rumor of such an agreement with Huong would be desirable in drawing support to his candidacy. [redacted]

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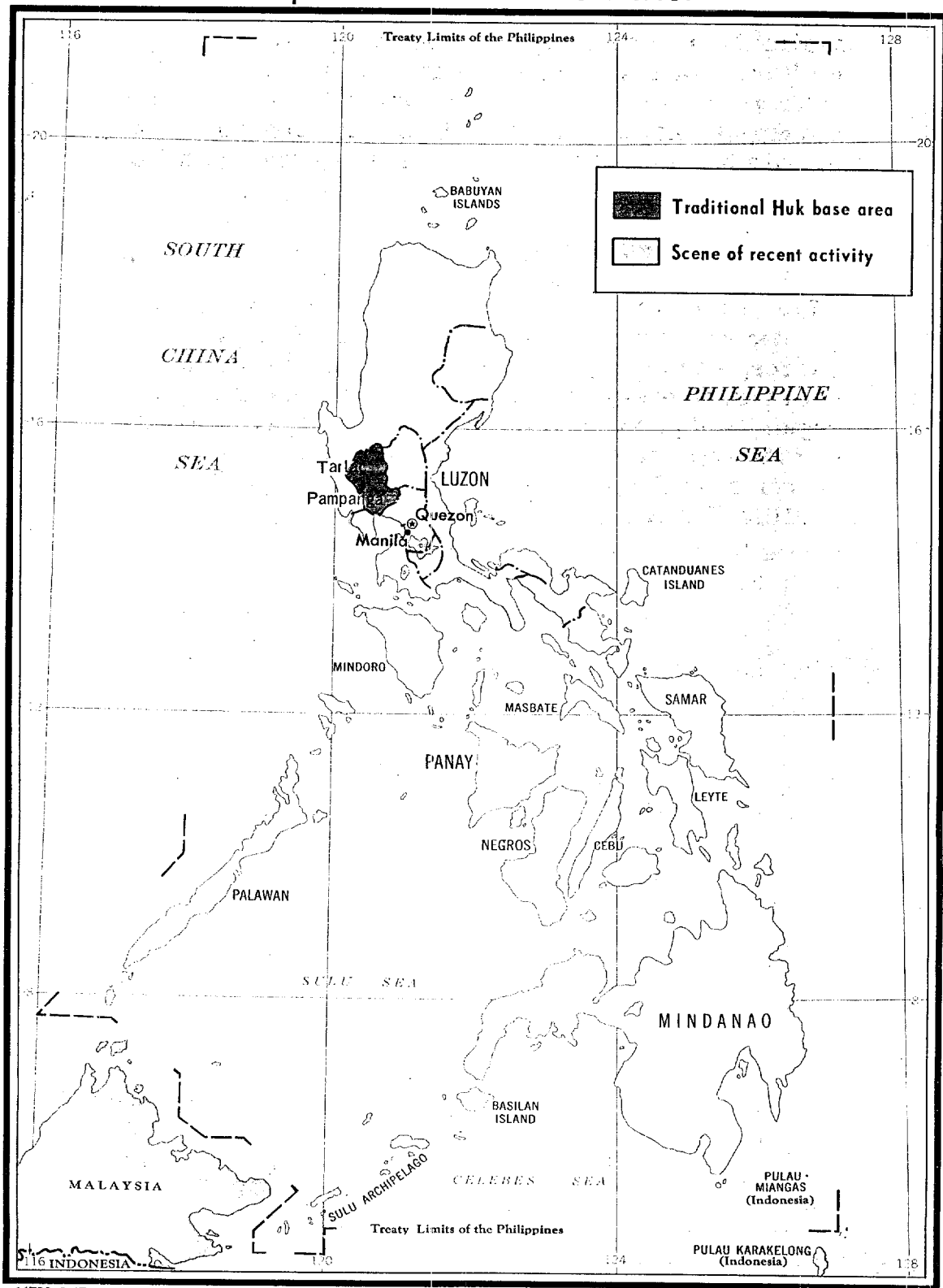
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PHILIPPINES: Expansion of Huk Activities



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Philippines: Pro-Communist Huks are intensifying their operations in Luzon.

Groups of Huks have been noted in several provinces of central Luzon outside their traditional base of Tarlac and Pampanga. The Huks have been recruiting new members, collecting "taxes" and supplies, and establishing safehavens for their paramilitary bands, who are evading government troops.

The Huks have also been in frequent contact with local politicians to plan strategy for the off-year elections in November. The considerable Huk influence in this area has resulted in widespread official connivance in their activities.

The number of armed Huk activists has expanded during the past two years to possibly 200-300. They have the sympathetic or passive support of about 26-29,000 persons. In addition, urban-based Communist front groups recently have sought to extend their activities into rural Luzon.

The leftist resurgence may be stimulated by continued government failure to implement any effective reform program in the area. Farmers tend to look outside the government for relief.

The Philippine constabulary has recently been conducting a more vigorous campaign against the armed Huk bands and is sending civic action teams into the barrios to encourage the farmers to support government efforts. The result has been more frequent clashes and increased Huk retaliation against suspected government informers.

In short, the anti-Huk campaign has shown little progress and will probably continue to be hampered by the cooperation of local officials with the Huks.

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Panama: Sporadic violence by hard-line Communist students in Panama City may be setting the stage for more disturbances soon.

During the past week, small bands of extremist-led students carried out acts of vandalism, including the burning of cars bearing Canal Zone license plates. The National Guard arrested about 40 agitators and broke precedent by searching the National Institute--a large secondary school located on the Canal Zone boundary. The National Guard commander is taking steps to cope with further outbreaks.



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NOTES

Hong Kong - Communist China: Measures imposed by the British authorities early this week have largely restored order in the colony, but the local Communists are conducting token strikes in an effort to keep the agitation alive. Peking is maintaining its propaganda pressure by reiterating charges that the British committed atrocities and by insisting that London immediately and unconditionally accept the five-point demand delivered to the British chargé on 15 May. [REDACTED]

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Communist China - Australia: The Chinese are completing arrangements for the purchase of 1.5 million tons of Australian wheat, the first contract for imports during the second half of 1967. Canada will soon agree to provide significant quantities of wheat in the same period. During the year ending in June, Peking will have imported about 5 million tons of wheat; the Chinese probably will seek to import about that amount in the coming 12-month period. China has also contracted recently to buy small quantities of other grains from Argentina and Zambia. [REDACTED]

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Aden: A general strike called in Aden on 25 May apparently was backed by the Egyptian-backed Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY). The reason for the strike is not clear, but it does not appear to be connected with the Arab-Israeli crisis. The strike is symptomatic of the unstable political situation in the colony and will increase the possibility of further violence. [REDACTED]

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